

Church – The Beginnings, Part 34
Missions: Sent out by the Holy Spirit - Antioch
Acts 13:1-4 | 06/18/2017
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Acts 13:1-4

Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. ² As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, “Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” ³ Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away.

⁴ So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus.

Background regarding the church of Antioch:

1. Mostly, overwhelmingly a Gentile church with mostly no Biblical Background
2. Originally planted by Jews from Cypress and Cyrene preaching to Gentiles (Greek speaking Gentiles) – spawned from Persecution [Acts 11:19-21]
3. God brought together Leaders to help this brand new church to grow [Acts 11:22-26]
4. God chose the church in Antioch to spearhead the Famine relief effort for the church the region of Judea and Jerusalem. They became experienced in working together to help others, and learned how to follow God’s Ordained Leadership in the process.
(For more from last week’s message, please go to: <https://wp1.NLFJI.org/300>)

Observations:

1. Antioch is the **IDEAL Model of a Local Church Family** - God put together this church using **Born-Again, Messianic Jews** from Cypress and Cyrene.

It was **NOT** started **officially** by the church of Jerusalem or any other group. It was started **independently**. It was helped from the partnership of the Jerusalem church, later.

2. **Missionary Promises from God:** From Genesis 10 and the Tower of Babel incident and onward, God was going to use the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to bring His Redemption to the rest of mankind. In the book of Acts - God was recorded as keeping His Promises.

Isaiah 42:6 - “I, the **LORD**, have called you [Israel] in righteousness, and will hold your hand; I will keep you and give you as a covenant to the people, as a light to the Gentiles” (see Romans 15:8-16 → Promises that God would use Israel to reach the Gentiles)

3. **The Strategy of Missions of the Church of Antioch** was developed through much prayer and fasting, by the Leadership of the Church, **being led by the Holy Spirit**. God, the Holy Spirit, developed their strategy and methodology for Missions →
Planting New Gentile Churches

Barnabas and Saul were chosen and set-apart by God.

The Holy Spirit, Himself spearheaded Missions FROM Antioch.

It was Official, they were Ordained (hands, laid on), there was a Ceremony.

**“... having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away.
So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit ...”**

Remember this is exactly the **opposite** of the beginnings of Antioch. It was begun by normal Jewish Messianic Believers sharing the Gospel. They were not ordained, officially sent out, etc. They were fleeing persecution. **They were sent by Jesus.**

Implications:

- 1. God, the Holy Spirit, is in charge of the entire Mission – Ground Operations.**
The Holy Spirit is also called the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of Jesus, the Spirit of Truth, the Spirit of the Father. **He is in charge, here on earth, through the church.**
The Trinity (the Tri-Unity) of the Godhead (i.e.: God in His entire Being and Essence) is involved in every part of the Mission of the Gospel to the Nations:
God, the Holy Spirit – applies the plan of the Mission → The Spread of the Gospel of Christ through the Church to the Lost (to the lost nations – the Gentiles).
He is like the 5 Star General in charge of all Ground Operations of the Military Advance
God, the Son (God, the Word) [Jesus Christ, Yeshua h'Mashiach] – He is the very Sacrifice and Means of this Salvation – He is the Good News, the Gospel. He is the LORD, the Head of the Church, the Shepherd of our souls. He is the Messiah and Savior of the World. Jesus is God communicated to His creation. The WORD.
God, the Father – He is the member of the Tri-Unity of God who planned everything out, the entire plan of world-wide, global redemption for all mankind. The Son is the means of this salvation, the Holy Spirit works it out and applies it to mankind. God, the Son, glorifies the Father. God, the Holy Spirit, glorifies the Son.
- 2. Barnabas and Saul were sent out by the Holy Spirit, just as much as those from Cyprus and Cyrene who Preached the Gospel to the Gentiles in Antioch. When God, the Holy Spirit, moves upon an individual's heart to share the Gospel with the lost around him or her – it is the same as God moving upon a local church family's leadership team to set apart new missionaries in a very formal situation. Both are God's ways of doing things. We see this from the beginnings of Antioch to her being used of God for Missions. So, when God moves on your heart to share the Gospel, to pray for the lost, you need to do it, regardless of any fanfare or ceremony.**
- 3. The IDEAL Model for Missions Sending – shown in how God worked in the Leadership Team of the church of Antioch → The Ideal Missions Sending Church**
→ God chooses the best, most experienced church leaders (in His assessment)
The IDEAL is for God to use **the best and most mature** for cross-cultural church planting missions. Christians who have been **faithful, available, teachable, usable** for God within the local church family, who have shown godly leadership, these are the folks God typically uses for Missions, as seen within the book of Acts, and the rest of the New Testament, etc. (Biblical Model – Biblical Principle)

We also see apprenticeship as well – think of Timothy, Titus, John-Mark, and others.

Because Missions is so important, God wants to use His best vessels for this highest of callings.

But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor. ²¹ Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a VESSEL FOR HONOR, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work. (2 Timothy 2:20-21)

Would God consider you, His Vessel of Honor, today – set apart (sanctified) and useful for the Master – for the sake of the Gospel, for His Mission?